

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PORT L 00317 011228Z  
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 TRSE-00 AGR-05 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04  
SIL-01 ACDA-07 IO-13 EUR-12 NEA-10 EA-07 /121 W  
-----011233Z 004990 /17

R 010745Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6583

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0317

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR PINT ECON MP  
SUBJECT: MAURITIUS WEEKLY REVIEW - APRIL 1 (SUMMARY)

REF: PORT LOUIS 286

1. IN THE ASSEMBLY ON MARCH 29 FOREIGN MINISTER WALTER MADE A STOUT DEFENSE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY. HE ATTRIBUTED THE MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT'S OBSESSION WITH THE QUESTION OF DIEGO GARCIA TO GUIDANCE RECEIVED FROM THEIR (SOVIET) MASTERS, AND CHARGED THAT THE OPPOSITION PAINTED A ONE-SIDED PICTURE, IGNORING THE SOVIET BASE IN SOMALIA AND LARGE FLEET OF WARSHIPS WHICH CRUISE THE INDIAN OCEAN, WHILE FOCUSING ENTIRELY ON THE AMERICAN "DANGER." WALTER QUOTED FAVORABLY AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER FRASER'S CALL FOR AN EQUIVALENCE OF GREAT POWER MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM MADE A WELL-ARGUED, EIGHTY-MINUTE DEFENSE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S RECORD IN HIS FIRST MAJOR INTERVENTION IN THE NEW ASSEMBLY.

2. BOOLELL OF LABOR AND DUVAL OF THE PMSD CARRIED THE COALITION'S MUNICIPAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN TO CUREPIPE, A PMSD STRONGHOLD. THEY CONTINUED TO STRESS THE THEME THAT THESE ELECTIONS WILL OFFER THE MAURITIAN VOTERS ONE LAST CHANCE TO DEFEAT THE  
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"COMMUNISTS" OF THE MMM. A LABOR DEPUTY WHO THREATENED TO QUIT THE PARTY (AND BRING DOWN THE GOVERNMENT) BECAUSE HE WASN'T MADE "CHIEF WHIP" AS HE WANTED, WAS KEPT IN THE FOLD WHEN THE COALITION SURRENDERED TO HIS THREAT AND THUS DEMONSTRATED ITS WEAKNESS. MMM LEADER PAUL BERENGER MADE A BRIEF TRIP TO THE SYCHELLES TO DISCUSS HIS PROPOSAL FOR A CONFERENCE OF INDIAN OCEAN "PROGRESSIVE" PARTIES WITH SPUP LEADER RENE. HE PLANS

A SIMILAR TRIP TO MADAGASCAR SHORTLY. THE MMM PAPER PUBLISHED A "STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL" REPORT ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION PREPARED FOR THE SUGAR INDUSTRY BY ITS PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE WHICH PAINTED A GLOOMY PICTURE OF THE PROSPECTS FOR THE RULING COALITION UNLESS ITS LEADERS TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE ELECTORATE'S DESIRE FOR CHANGE.

3. ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT THERE WERE FOUR DEVELOPMENTS OF NOTE:

(A) A NEARLY TWO PERCENT RISE IN CONSUMER PRICES IN JANUARY;  
(B) CONTINUED WEAKNESS IN THE MAURITIAN STOCK MARKET, AS INVESTORS REFUSE TO BUY SHARES IN PRIVATE SECTOR COMPANIES;  
(C) VERY LOW RAINFALL IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH, WHICH COULD HURT THE SUGAR CROP IF THE DROUGHT CONTINUES INTO APRIL; (D) THE GOVERNMENT PAID ONE MILLION RUPEES IN DEMURRAGE CHARGES BECAUSE OF THE PORT CONGESTION.

KEELEY

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
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22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009